190. Responsible Government.

MR. P. K. RAGHAVAN PILLAI (*Member, Chirayinkil taluk, Group II*) said that representative institutions were not unknown in ancient Travancore. Travancore had her *Karayogams, Nattukutams* and *Desasanghams*, all institutions instinct with the true spirit of democracy. But none of these institutions was in existence at the present time or if any existed they had long ago ceased to fulfil their original functions. This deplorable situation was brought about by successive administrations of foreign Dewans, who in their eagerness to exercise autocratic powers stifled what elements of responsible government they found in the State. Among foreign Dewans there were certainly great and noble men like Mr. V. P. Madhava Row, the father of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly; but the generality of them were enemies of popular Government. This could be seen from the history of the Legislative Council. The powers of that body which started with full legislative powers were curtailed only during the time of foreign Dewans. The degeneracy of several departments for the well-being of the people also illustrated the apathy of foreign Dewans. Such for instance were the Sanitary Department, the Irrigation Department etc.

An executive council responsible to the legislature would alone serve the interests of the people. It might probably be said that Travancore had not yet developed a good party system in political matters, that what parties existed followed only communal lines, and that therefore she was unfit to have an executive council. But there was no substance in that plea. Communal squabbles existed because there was no government responsible to the people. Political parties would be formed, when parties were given political power.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. P. K. Raghavan Pillai, I will deal with your representation so far as it relates to the subject of responsible Government when I give a collective answer to all the members who spoke upon the same subject.

191. Suggestions for the economic improvement of the country.

MR. S. SUBRAHMONYA IYER (*Member, Kalkulam taluk, Group I*) said that there were vast tracts of uncultivated lands at the disposal of Government, which if brought under cultivation would go a long way towards improving the export trade of the country. But the cultivation of these lands was possible only with the help of capital and organisation. Even if these lands were offered free of *taravila*, it would not be possible to find *bonafide* applicants. The actual cultivators of lands were poor and could not afford to take to cultivation as no land would be yielding for the first few years. But if they were given money to maintain themselves with during the period of waiting, they would be willing to come forward for taking over the lands. A scheme for land colonisation was hence very desirable.

Persons desirous of permanently settling themselves on land for the purpose of cultivation should be given lands and an officer of the Agricultural Department should be appointed to advise them and to

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